

Appl. No. : 10/763,897
Filed : January 23, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the Claims as follows. Insertions are shown underlined while deletions are ~~struck through~~. Please cancel Claims 1-3, 7, 16-17. Please add Claims 18-21.

1-3 (canceled)

4-6 (canceled)

7 (canceled)

8-9 (canceled)

10 (currently amended): A method for trapping a micro-crystal, comprising:

placing a droplet containing micro-crystals ~~in a predetermined location on a base;~~

inserting a gripping member into the droplet;

gripping one of the micro-crystals in the droplet by ~~a~~the gripping member;

inserting ~~placing~~ a loop into the droplet and positioning the loop to ~~enclose~~ place

the micro-crystal being gripped substantially inside the loop, said loop being configured to retain liquid of the droplet therein by closing the loop with the liquid using its surface tension when separated from the droplet; and

separating the loop and the gripping member together ~~the micro-crystal being placed inside the loop~~ from the droplet while maintaining the position of the micro-crystal being gripped by the gripping member in the vicinity of and enclosed by the loop, thereby retaining the crystal inside the loop with liquid of the droplet with surface tension of the liquid.

11 (currently amended): The method as recited in Claim 10, further comprising observing and displaying at least the gripping member and the loop at said steps of inserting the gripping member, gripping the micro-crystals, placing~~inserting/positioning~~ the loop, and separating the gripping member and the loop.

12-15 (canceled)

16-17 (canceled)

18 (new): The method as recited in Claim 10, wherein the loop is positioned to place the micro-crystal being gripped on an upper side of the loop at the step of inserting the loop.

19 (new): The method as recited in Claim 11, wherein the loop is positioned to place the micro-crystal being gripped on an upper side of the loop at the step of inserting the loop, the step

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of inserting the loop is performed while observing the loop above the micro-crystal gripped by the gripping member.

20 (new): The method as recited in Claim 10, wherein the step of separating the gripping member and the loop is conducted by lowering the base.

21 (new): The method as recited in Claim 19, wherein the step of separating the gripping member and the loop is conducted by lowering the base.